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TICOM/I-98

INTERROGATION OF OBERST RANDEWIG

ON GERMAN DECEPTION PLANS

Report SIR 1724 on the interrogation of Randewig at CSDIC (UK) is re-issued herewith to recipients of the TICOM/I Series.

See also TICOM/I-68.

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THIS REPORT IS SECRET

Report on information obtained from PW CS/2334 Obst RANDEWIG
Wehrmachtsnachrichtenführer zbV 700,
captured OTTENSBÜTTEL, 9 May 45.

GERMAN DECEPTION PLAN IN MAY 40

PREAMBLE

1. PW is a specialist in intercept matters. He was commissioned by the OKH in 39 to prepare a wireless deception plan which was to come into operation with the German offensive against FRANCE in May 40.

2. The plan was drawn up in detail by PW between Oct 39 and Feb 40; the execution of it lay in other hands. The information given below provides a picture of what the German Command expected to achieve by this deception scheme and how it was to be organised. PW emphasises that he has forgotten many small details in the intervening years and that only the salient points of the scheme have been brought out.

3. As PW was otherwise employed during the May offensive, he cannot provide any valuable information on the phase of execution as opposed to the planning phase. He knows, however, that the plan was put into operation, and he subsequently heard that it had been successful.

PREPARATIONS

4. Orders to prepare a wireless deception plan on the Western front were given by the OKH to the Cond Army Group C (HQ in FRANKFURT a/M) in Oct 39. PW, as Kar d Führungsnachrichten Abt II/40 of the OKH, was given orders by Gen Maj THIELE, Chief of Staff to Chef NW (Chief signals officer to the OKH), and told to work out details in conjunction with Gen Lt SCHRADER, chief signals officer of Army Group C.

OBJECT

5. The object of the deception scheme was to trick the French intelligence service into believing that a new "army", consisting of three corps and in all of ten divs, was being moved into a concentration area between 2nd Army (HQ BAD KREUZNACH) - SIEGFRIED LINE sector TRIER, SAARBRÜCKEN, WEISSENBURG, and 7th Army (HQ FREUDENSTADT) - SIEGFRIED LINE sector WEISSENBURG/BASLE. The new "army" was to be brought into this concentration area shortly before the planned assault by Army Groups A and B to the North.

6. It was hoped thereby to persuade the French to retain their strategic reserves in the VERDUN/METZ/NANCY areas to meet a potential direct German attack on the MAGINOT LINE. The German command appreciated that an early move by these reserves to the NW to counter the attack of Army Groups A and B might create a serious threat to the German left flank.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7. During the planning of this operation, it became clear to PW that a wireless deception scheme would be very difficult to put across satisfactorily, owing to the fact that the area of operations was well supplied with a good network of line

communications which would have been adequate to cope with the traffic of a newly committed "army". It was to be expected that the French intelligence would be aware of this state of affairs. Against this could be set the facts that wireless silence for frontline formations would be ordered in preparation for D-day (10 May 40), and that only training units in the area EAST of the Middle and Lower RHINE and BLACK FOREST would be allowed to carry on wireless traffic. Consequently the bogus "army" WT traffic would have to be started only shortly before D-day, otherwise the French intelligence would be able to identify the traffic as a deception measure.

8. Consequently it was necessary on the one hand to execute the deception scheme with great caution, and on the other hand to provide the French intercept service with a considerable volume of training traffic in the reserve areas EAST of the line, so that the French would have to reckon with the committing of entirely new German formations. This training traffic would have to be carried out with powerful wireless sets that could easily be DF'd, and over wavelengths which it could be safely assumed would be continuously intercepted by the French signals intelligence. To ensure still greater reality it would be necessary to call off a large volume of the training traffic shortly before D-Day, at a time when the new "army" was to begin its move into position.

AREA OF OPERATIONS

9. The concentration area for army HQ and army tps was to be area BAD DÜRKHEIM/GRÜNSTADT.

10. Concentration areas for the three corps:

ST INGBERT - SAARGEMÜND
ZWEIBRÜCKEN - PIRMASENS
LANDAU - BERGZABERN.

11. In these areas and the area of the divisional HQs actual reconnaissance was to be carried out by advance parties and by signals units who were to communicate through the existing line communications. Naturally the advance parties were not to be followed by any genuine formations.

PLAN OF SIGNALS ACTIVITY

12. WT traffic between the new "army" and its corps and divs was not to begin until D minus 5 (5 May). On the other hand, stations were to be allowed to start two days previously (D minus 7) procedure traffic necessary to make contact. This making of contact would be picked up in the existing wireless silence and would enable the French intercept service to DF stations.

13. Likewise the "army HQ" was to try to make wireless contact with the genuine army HQs in the area as well as with the fixed wireless stations of the home wireless network. Whereas the traffic to the genuine army HQs was to be carried through without response, the fixed wireless stations were to acknowledge the traffic, as it was considered that these fixed stations were well known to the French intelligence. All the messages to be transmitted in this traffic were so composed that they would give experienced French evaluators the picture of a new "army" moving into position on the German side.

COMMUNICATIONS

14. It was assumed that to move the training formations from their areas EAST of the RHINE to their concentration areas, the following railway lines would be used:

WORMS - KAISERSLAUTERN - HOMBURG
SCHIFFERSTADT - NEUSTADT - LANDAU
SPEYER - LANDAU - PIRMASENS - ZWEIBRÜCKEN

/3

ADDITION DECEPTIV MEASURES

FINAL ST

O.S.D.I. 7 Sep 45

Railheads were allocated; also roads, e.g.

HOLBURG - BLIESKASTEL or LANDAU - BERGZABERN.

15. To simulate a genuine movement along the railways and the roads, wireless traffic was in fact the best means, since the existing line communications along the railways would not have been adequate to cope with so large an additional concentration of tps. A further aid to deception was the fact that this wireless traffic would be carried out in an international cipher which the German Reichspost and Police employed. Wireless messages relating to loading tables, train schedules and tp movements were, therefore, so poorly encipbered that it could safely be assumed that even poor cryptographers could solve them. Such breaches of security would not incite suspicion since they would be carried out by a civilian as opposed to an army wireless net.

16. During the movement westward wireless messages would be passed referring to the areas from which the tps had supposedly moved, i.e. to the training areas EAST of the RHINE, where intensive training traffic was to be carried out until the deception plan proper began.

ADDITIONAL DECEPTIVE MEASURES

17. To confirm the picture given by bogus wireless traffic, certain steps were to be taken to deceive French air reconnaissance. Thus training material was to be collected and handled at certain railheads. Moreover, tank moves at night were to be undertaken to deceive the enemy.

FINAL STAGES

18. On D minus 5, the entire wireless network was to begin operations at an ever-increasing tempo. The wireless traffic was to be conducted in a cipher which it was anticipated would be in the possession of the French intelligence and could, therefore, be read. In this connection PW heard that the Abwehr, through its own channels, was intending to place a cipher in the hands of the French intelligence service; what became of this plan he is unable to say.

19. Deliberate breaches of signals security were encouraged and private conversations between wireless operators occurred which, it was hoped, would facilitate evaluation by the French intercept service. The traffic from the front to the rear areas was so designed as to give the enemy the impression that the concentration would soon be completed.

20. This deceptive traffic was to go on from D minus 5 to D plus 2. By that time the main German strategic plan would be in operation. Moreover, it was hoped to launch certain local attacks on the MAGINOT LINE in the SAAR area from D plus 2 onwards. These attacks would be linked by the French intelligence with the bogus traffic picked up.

C.S.D.I.C.(U.K.)
7 Sep 45.

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